

# Goodwin's Weekly.

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## IRRIGATION, THE WORK ON HAND.

It has always been the rightful boast that the Utah Pioneers were the first white men that used the waters of this region to irrigate the land. It was a great achievement; to the farming of the arid West it was what the building of the first turreted ship was to the world's navies.

But the sons of the Pioneers have done very little to improve upon the work of their fathers.

For almost sixty years, all who have cultivated the soil of Utah have accepted the fact that, the chiefest dependence lies in the application of water to the land during the growing seasons of vegetation. But Utah is about the worst irrigated state in the Union. That is, there is less judgment used in the application of the water than in any other state. When water is plenty, it is common to see the lower side of a ranch made so nearly a swamp that no crop is raised; while the efforts of the agricultural classes to conserve water have been pitifully feeble. Both Colorado and California can give lessons in irrigation to the men of Utah who have been in the business all their lives and who think they are past grand masters in the art.

The rude art of irrigation, such as was practiced by the Pemo Indians a hundred years before any white man stood on the soil of Utah, is what has been done, and is still being done here; the science of irrigation, that is, the best handling of the water to get the most from its use upon the land, has hardly been studied at all in this state.

The people and the officers of the state government have failed to do their duty. For instance, the life of the streams depend in great part upon the condition of the water sheds the drainage of which makes the streams.

These water sheds are in the mountains; the most important factor regarding them is their holding the snow as long as possible in the spring months to insure the feeding of the streams. But the people and the government of the state, have permitted watersheds to be continuously so overstocked by cattle and sheep that all young forest plants, those that hold the snows, are destroyed.

The Legislature should see to this, keeping in mind that the largest streams come from forests and that the water that flows from them is vastly more valuable than the land itself, and should see that proper supervision is given to the trees and the water sheds on which they grow. Again, the low herbage, that which never makes trees, is what holds the snows back.

The government irrigation law—which, by the way, is one of the ablest and wisest measures ever passed by Congress—can be of infinite value to this state, if it is met in the right spirit by the people. The situation here, as declared by one of the Federal officials engaged in the work, "is most complex. Present canals are not on best lines for effective systems. Everything depends on the final attitude of the people in relation to improvements. All water rights must be adjudicated. The department has no hold on lands; the people who have must be the prime movers. The state officials are now very much interested and are doing much educational work. The department will require action on the part of the people much the same as any investor would, should he take up the improvement of the system."

It will be seen by the above how much the people should be interested, for it is a question of much more than doubling the lands under cultivation. It is a work of such vast importance, that a system of education should at once be started to acquaint the people with the full plan and scope of it and what the people need do to receive the boon.

It is said that the Commercial Club is about to move in the business. It can do nothing more useful. Then the Legislature should back any well-devised plan to further the cause. The good will, the best minds, and the best work of the whole state should be enlisted with the thought that the grand opportunity must not be lost.

## THE GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

The message of Governor Cutler is an able paper. Its review of present conditions is lucid, its recommendations are almost every one good.

The discussion of the School of Mines, its usefulness and needs, is all up to date. The discussion of the health question is most pertinent, the blunt expression that 1,500 people die in this pure air annually from preventable diseases, has a harsh sound, but it is needed. Irrigation is ably handled in the message, but we are sorry that it did not serve a clearer notice on the people who own the lands and the water for irrigating those lands, that they must meet the Government halfway and with liberal ideas, or the national irrigation law will bring no benefits to Utah.

The ideas of the message on the educational institutions of the State are all excellent and up to date.

The whole message ought to be a guide to the Legislature, a guide and great assistance to the members. It ought, too, to help the Legislature to systematize its business in order to get the most work done in the shortest space of time.

The recommendations for economy are good and needed. A State that is expending \$1,000,000 annually of the people's money should be most careful.

It is altogether a good and strong message.

## THE NAVY'S NEEDS.

It is said that some Middle West Congressmen recall before the great appropriation asked for by the Secretary of the Navy. They want to reduce the number of ships to be built and to stop the perfecting of the Annapolis Naval Academy.

Some men never learn anything; others forget what they once knew.

Had five more ships, the Oregon been in our navy in 1898, there have been no war with Spain. Those ships in their armament would have cost perhaps \$50,000,000.

When Congress declared war, the President asked for \$50,000,000 to be used as he thought best and it was promptly voted him. And that was only a beginning.

One George Washington who in his day was accounted as about the clearest-brained man on this round world, left an injunction to the American people which was "in time of peace prepare for war."

That was not half as pertinent a remark in Washington's time as it is now. The older nations were a long way off. Our shipbuilders could almost build a fleet while a foreign fleet would be coming to our shores.

Now Europe has been pushed by steam up within seven days of our coast; those great powers, while ostensibly very friendly, are at the same time both jealous and apprehensive of the increasing power of the Great Republic. Moreover, the Spanish-American States owe to Europe a vast sum, going into the billions, and there will be an insistence on settlement one of these days. Then something is going on just across the Pacific from our West Coast that may involve this country in trouble before it is over, and nothing is so tempting to a hungry power as to know that the power it wants to pick a quarrel with is in great measure defenseless.

It takes a good while to build a battleship; it takes still more time to train fighting men for work at sea. The great training school should be made just as nearly absolutely perfect as human invention, investigation and study can make it, and with it ships should be supplied just as rapidly as it is possible to build them, until we reach the point when no nation on earth would covet a clash at sea with the United States. A single incident, sprung in a night by a few reckless and blood-thirsty men, made the war with Spain an absolute necessity. A nation, no more than an individual, knows when trouble is coming. The only safe way is to be prepared to meet it when it does come.

For thirty years after the Civil War closed, our navy was kept in a condition to invite attack. It was a criminal disregard of duty on the part of Congress that it was so. Even when the war with Spain came, had Cervera known the condition of our Atlantic coast defenses; he could have directed his three swiftest ships to the north and laid New York and Boston under contribution. There were not a dozen rounds of ammunition for the sea coast guns, no smokeless powder, and so weak was the navy on the Atlantic that the Oregon had to be rushed from Seattle on her 13,000-mile trip, to take her place in the fleet off Havana.

When the people last November gave Theodore Roosevelt a plurality of 2,500,000 votes, by that act they declared their desire that this nation should "walk softly" but at the same time should "carry a big stick." They utterly repudiated the peace without honor of Judge Parker, and the whole company that tried to scare the country into the belief that an alert and aggressive President was dangerous to this Republic. They shared exactly the President's desire for peace, but to be ready, if need be, for war.

Mr. Taggart, at the banquet on Tuesday night,